

**Transcript of  
April 28, 2004  
Public Hearing**

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1 RE: HIGH-SPEED RAIL SYSTEM )  
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## REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING

13

Wednesday, April 28, 2004

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Fresno, California

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Reported by: Erika Banuelos, CSR No. 11621

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## APPEARANCES

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High-Speed Rail Authority Members

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Chairperson: Joseph E. Petrillo

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Vice Chairperson: Fran Florez

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Mehdi Morshed

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Rod Diridon

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Fresno, California

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Wednesday, April 28, 2004; 4:00 p.m.

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Fresno Chamber of Commerce

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5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: It is now 4:00,  
6 and I will call the hearing by the California High-Speed  
7 Rail Authority, hearing on the environmental impact  
8 report and environmental impact report statement, I call  
9 this meeting to order.

10 This is to me, personally, the most exciting  
11 part of the process. This is the chance that the  
12 general public has to participate in the process of  
13 defining the project and defining the environmental  
14 impacts on the project.

15 The way the environmental impact report system  
16 works is we retain what we think are the best experts  
17 that we can find, and they draft a report for us  
18 following the law, indicating what has to be in an  
19 environmental impact report. That report is then issued  
20 as a draft document, and the public can review that, and  
21 we encourage the public to participate by commenting on  
22 that because, by law, we will take all of the comments  
23 and we will give them to the experts. They will have to  
24 review them, analyze them, and respond to those  
25 comments, and eventually all of that will come back to

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1 us for a decision on the project and on the mitigations  
2 that will be part of the project to bring it into  
3 compliance with the state environmental laws. So this  
4 is the chance for the public to actually have a real  
5 impact on our process.

6 Now, we'll begin this hearing with some public  
7 officials who are here, and the first one is Gabe  
8 Camarillo who is speaking on behalf of Congressman Cal  
9 Dooley.

PH-F001

10 MR. GABE CAMARILLO: Good afternoon, ladies and  
11 gentlemen. I'm Gabe Camarillo with the office of  
12 Congressman Cal Dooley. I have a statement on his  
13 behalf which I would like to read into the record.  
14 Dear Colleagues,

PH-F001-1

15 I would like to commend the California  
16 High-Speed Rail Authority and the Federal Railroad  
17 Administration for their work in conducting the Draft  
18 Program Environmental Impact Report Environmental Impact  
19 Statement EIR/EIS study. This study confirmed that  
20 high-speed trains are the most attractive option for  
21 meeting future intercity travel demand in our state.  
22 The results demonstrate high-speed rail promises to  
23 minimize highway construction costs and reduce  
24 pollution, while integrating our diverse communities in  
25 unprecedented ways.

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1 As we collectively embark on our first segment  
2 on the implementation phase, we must remain mindful of  
3 the Rail Authority's core objectives: Which include  
4 maximizing connectivity and accessibility and minimizing  
5 the impact of the high-speed rail to existing economic  
6 and natural resources. The proposed alignment option  
7 connecting the City of Bakersfield to the Los Angeles  
8 basin through State Route 58 and the Antelope Valley  
9 would best achieve these goals. To ensure that the

PH-F001-2

10 maximum number of people have access to the rail system,  
 11 the alignment should include the Antelope Valley  
 12 communities of Palmdale and Lancaster. These cities  
 13 have seen population growth of 69 and 22 percent,  
 14 respectively, in the last decade, and will continue to  
 15 experience significant population growth independent of  
 16 the high-speed rail. Access to this region is both  
 17 logical and necessary. In addition, the State Route 58  
 18 alignment will minimize the conversion in the South San  
 19 Joaquin Valley of some of the most productive farmland  
 20 in the world to residential uses.

21 The Interstate 5 alignment would leave out the  
 22 growing population of the Antelope Valley and will also  
 23 result in the permanent loss of valuable farmland in  
 24 Kern County.

25 Consistent with the Rail Authority's goal to  
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1 establish the San Joaquin Valley as the heart of the  
 2 state's high-speed rail system, I also support an  
 3 alignment option that accesses key population and  
 4 employment areas in the Fresno region. Bypassing the  
 5 urban centers in the City of Fresno would be a serious  
 6 disservice to the critically underserved residents of  
 7 our valley.

8 I look forward to working with the High-Speed  
 9 Rail Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration  
 10 in support of this landmark project, and I remain  
 11 optimistic that its future implementation will connect  
 12 the Central Valley to the rest of the state without  
 13 harming its most valuable resources.

14 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you. And  
 15 we thank the Congressman for his support.

16 The next speaker is Supervisor Gloria Cortez of  
 17 Merced County.

18 MS. GLORIA CORTEZ-KEENE: Ladies and gentlemen,  
 19 thank you for this opportunity, and thank you for your  
 20 endeavors for the high-speed rail. First of all -- you  
 21 need to be commended, first of all, for all the work you  
 22 are doing and the endless, endless hours that you are  
 23 putting in and the self-sacrifice.

24 I would like to, first of all, read this letter  
 25 that I have. It's a short letter, and I'm going to give  
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1 you a copy of it right now. It's in reference to the  
 2 Draft Environmental Impact Report.

3 For the record, though, in case that machine  
 4 can't see through the walls here, my name is Gloria  
 5 Cortez-Keene. I am a supervisor from Merced County.  
 6 Dear Authority Members,

7 I would like to take this opportunity to show  
 8 my continued support for the California High-Speed Rail  
 9 System and the fact that the San Joaquin Valley will be  
 10 an important part of the system. Merced County is  
 11 especially recognized as a key part of the entire  
 12 system.

13 However, in reviewing the draft EIR, I noticed  
 14 that the station alternatives mentioned for Merced

PH-F001-2  
cont.

PH-F001-3

PH-F001-4

PH-F002

PH-F002-1

PH-F002-2

15 County are described only as potential stations as with  
16 other stations throughout the system. There are a  
17 number of alternatives for station stops right now as we  
18 speak, but it is important that I communicate the  
19 importance of the entire high-speed rail system in  
20 having at least one station stop located in the County  
21 of Merced. That one, we hope, would be at Castle where,  
22 of course, we stand ready to have the hub maintained  
23 there, where it would mean hundreds of jobs to one of  
24 the communities that has the most highest unemployment  
25 rates in the entire State of California and nation.

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1 As the nation grows, the Valley stays. We  
2 hope, though, that through your help and your vision,  
3 you will be able to alleviate that problem because you  
4 have it within your grasp to do so.

5 So I wish you luck in your endeavor and God  
6 bless you all.

7 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you.

8 Next we have Mr. Bob Link, mayor of Visalia.

PH-F003 9 MR. BOB LINK: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you  
10 very much for the opportunity you have given me to speak  
11 on the future of the environmental impact on the future  
12 of the high-speed rail project.

13 The City of Visalia supports the high-speed  
14 rail project and for the reason that it would be a  
15 significant economic and environmental project to take  
16 place in the next 20 years for our community. The  
17 project has the support of the Visalia community,  
18 chamber and business community. The project has the  
19 support of the City staff which will help you and assist  
20 you through the process.

21 Some of the demographic reasons to consider the  
22 support of Visalia as a location is in 2020 Visalia will  
23 probably be about 200,000 people in the urbanized area.  
24 Visalia is a central hub to Kings and Tulare county, and  
25 by the year 2020 we estimate the population will be

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1 above 750,000 people. Visalia services many outlying  
2 communities such as Hanford, Lemoore, Farmersville,  
3 Lindsay, Exeter, Woodlake, Porterville, Selma,  
4 Kingsburg, Reedley and Dinuba.

5 Where we anticipate putting the station would  
6 be at the intersection of 198 and 99, which are two  
7 major freeways in the Valley, 198 going east and west  
8 from -- actually from Visalia over into the coast, and  
9 99, obviously, is the north/south one.

10 The City of Visalia presently provides regional  
11 opportunities. We are in discussions with the National  
12 Park Service Department on a shuttle service from  
13 Visalia to the National Parks. The City of Visalia is a  
14 partner in the Cross-Valley Rail System which goes from  
15 Visalia to Huron. A rail system providing future  
16 east/west passenger service for cities of Tulare and  
17 Kings counties is something we're presently working on.

18 The environmental reasons we think the support  
19 of the Highway 99 route is a good alternative is the

PH-F002-2  
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PH-F003-1

20 project will benefit the air quality, the alignment will  
21 have minimal impacts on property and land uses. There  
22 will be fewer environmental impacts overall on sensitive  
23 habitats and water resources. The City of Visalia owns  
24 and has readily available land for the proposed station.  
25 It would support reduced air pollutant emissions and

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1 improved air quality, which is an issue all of us in the  
2 Valley are aware of.

3 The municipal airport is actually across 99  
4 from there, which would potentially reduce the  
5 congestion of the highway.

6 The City of Visalia provides the most  
7 centralized site to the population for increased  
8 ridership.

9 Economic values in Visalia will maximize  
10 ridership revenue potential. The proposed site has a  
11 direct relation to Visalia's Regional Industrial Park,  
12 downtown work force, City Transit Center and regional  
13 medical facilities.

14 The City controls ample properties surrounding  
15 the site that will accommodate the station and  
16 maintenance facilities and parking.

17 The Visalia region has a large, affordable  
18 housing and labor market.

19 Riders could take advantage of other ancillary  
20 services in Visalia, including hotels and our convention  
21 center.

22 I want to thank you for allowing me to speak  
23 today about the benefits this project would bring to the  
24 City of Visalia. As mayor of the City, I can tell you  
25 that the City of Visalia is ready, willing and able to

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1 partner with the High-Speed Rail Authority to facilitate  
2 the system's presence in the two county area. Our city  
3 staff presently is reviewing the Draft EIR and will be  
4 sending written comments on the EIR by August 31st.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you for  
7 your support.

8 The next speaker we have is Juan Arambula.

9 MR. JUAN ARAMBULA: Good afternoon, Mr.  
10 Chairman and members of the rail authority. I come  
11 before you this afternoon simply to welcome you to  
12 Fresno County and to hope that you have a very nice and  
13 productive stay here. This is the district, the  
14 supervisorial district that I represent, so it's only  
15 appropriate that I come on behalf of my colleagues and  
16 wish you a warm welcome, literally and figuratively, and  
17 also to let you know that we, from the County, will be  
18 working closely with the counsel of government as well  
19 as the cities that are located along the various  
20 proposed lines, and we will be submitting our comments,  
21 we hope in a unified fashion so that we can speak with  
22 one voice and do so well before the end of the time  
23 period to submit comments.

24 So once again, welcome. We hope that you have

PH-F003-1  
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PH-F004

PH-F004-1

25 a very pleasant stay and we thank you for giving the  
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1 citizens of this region an opportunity to speak before  
2 you. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
4 much.

5 MR. ROD DIRIDON: Mr. Supervisor, if your  
6 downtown station location, which is what I think was  
7 being encouraged, is chosen, recognizing that the  
8 high-speed rail program would drastically increase the  
9 values of the land downtown if the station is located  
10 there, would you -- I know you can't speak for the City,  
11 but do you think the City and redevelopment agency  
12 programs in the area would be willing to put some of  
13 that value back into building the station?

14 MR. JUAN ARAMBULA: Well, I can't speak for the  
15 City, but if I could, I would say, yes.

16 MR. ROD DIRIDON: The idea there is that if you  
17 leave it to us, we're going to build you a big bus stop  
18 because we don't have the money to build a new station.  
19 But it seems only appropriate that the value that is  
20 going to be created around that station location should  
21 be put back into making something very attractive, not  
22 only making a statement for the system but also a  
23 declaration of pride for the City.

24 MR. JUAN ARAMBULA: I believe that would be  
25 very appropriate, and insofar as the counsel wishes to  
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1 hear from us, we'll certainly be glad to convey that  
2 sentiment.

3 MR. ROD DIRIDON: And to Mayor Link I was  
4 going to ask the same question, but I thought I would do  
5 it at one time.

6 MR. JUAN ARAMBULA: Thank you once again.

7 MR. ROD DIRIDON: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Next we have Jack  
9 LaRochelle who is speaking on behalf of Mayor Hall from  
10 the City of Bakersfield.

11 MR. ROD DIRIDON: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Link asked  
12 if he could respond to my comment.

13 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Oh, excuse me.

14 MR. BOB LINK: The location that you're looking  
15 at, in putting a potential station, is on City owned  
16 property. So I know that the City would be more than  
17 willing to work with you on the project in terms of the  
18 design and maybe some of the infrastructure.

19 MR. ROD DIRIDON: All right. Is it an area  
20 that you have already established as some sort of a  
21 revenue assessment issue?

22 MR. BOB LINK: I'd like to have our  
23 redevelopment man speak.

24 MR. MIKE OLMOS: It is not an area in the  
25 redevelopment area. It's west of the community,  
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1 immediately west of our airport. We have sites that the  
2 City owns that we would certainly be willing to talk to  
3 the High-Speed Rail Authority about locating the station

PH-F004-1  
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PH-F005

PH-F005-1

4 on that site. It's a prime location for this kind of  
5 facility, and the City has the capability of developing  
6 a package with your group that would -- that we believe  
7 could make that.

8 My name is Mike Olmos, O-l-m-o-s. I'm director  
9 of development for the City of Visalia.

10 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you. And  
11 before Mr. LaRoche comes up here, when you come up  
12 here, will you please give us your name, and if you  
13 represent someone, who you represent.

14 Everything is being taken down by our reporter  
15 here to be included in the record, and it would be,  
16 obviously, helpful. Thank you.

17 MR. JACK LaROCHELLE: Jack LaRoche, the  
18 Assistant Public Works Director for the City of  
19 Bakersfield.

20 First of all, I would like to say that the City  
21 very strongly supports the high-speed rail system and we  
22 look forward to its implementation. On behalf of Mayor  
23 Hall, I would like to read the following into the  
24 record.

25 The City has reviewed the draft Environmental

0015 Impact Report for the high-speed rail. With respect to  
1 the station locations and routes for Bakersfield, the  
2 City has the following comments:

3 The City Council and the Board of Supervisors  
4 has unanimously approved a preferred station location in  
5 downtown Bakersfield adjacent to the current Amtrak  
6 station. This preferred alternative was also adopted by  
7 the Kern Council of Governments. As such, a final  
8 Environmental Document should include this downtown  
9 location as the actual station location site for  
10 Bakersfield.

11 With respect to track alignment, any of the  
12 various track alignments as outlined in the Draft EIR is  
13 acceptable to the COB as long as it supports the  
14 preferred downtown station location.

15 Please note that an extensive study was  
16 commissioned by the Kern Council of Governments to  
17 determine the preferred location for the station. This  
18 extensive study identified the downtown site as the most  
19 desirous location and was unanimously approved by the  
20 City and the County. This study also included an  
21 extensive amount of public input and therefore should  
22 weigh heavily on the decision to locate the station  
23 downtown.

24 And finally, I'd like to say it's been a

0016 pleasure working with your staff, especially Carrie  
1 Pojiti. And as I told her and I would like to tell you,  
2 we are currently working on two freeway alignments. One  
3 is called Centennial Corridor and the other is the West  
4 Beltway. And we are also working with the City of  
5 Shafter, with the City manager over there on the West  
6 Beltway, which happens to also fit one of the alignment  
7 connecting the BNSF alignment. We would be happy to  
8

PH-F005-1  
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PH-F006-1

PH-F006-2

9 work with the Authority and the staff members to try and  
10 incorporate additional right-of-ways within those  
11 corridors from the freeway corridor for the high-speed  
12 rail with the soul purpose of saving money and saving  
13 time. And the downtown location certainly would save a  
14 lot of money and time. We would be happy to work with  
15 you.

16 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you.

17 I would like to recognize a past member of the  
18 Authority, Ed Grabeline. Thank you for coming. I'm  
19 sort of the newcomer on the Authority, and by people  
20 like Ed and over the many, many years we have tried to  
21 develop this important program. Thank you and thank you  
22 for your continued interest.

23 Our next speaker is Bob Madewell from the City  
24 of Fresno.

PH-F007

25 MR. BOB MADEWELL: Good afternoon Authority  
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1 members. Welcome to the City of Fresno. I'm sure I  
2 cannot surpass Supervisor Arambula's welcome to you, but  
3 I certainly can try, and I will try to answer some of  
4 Mr. Diridon's questions.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Can we have your  
6 name?

7 MR. BOB MADEWELL: Absolutely. As a matter of  
8 fact, it's Madewell, Bob Madewell, M-a-d-e-w-e-l-l.

9 Anyway, welcome to the City of Fresno.

10 To respond to Mr. Diridon's question about  
11 whether or not the City of Fresno would be inclined to  
12 help in these issues, let me tell you, we actually  
13 already are. We purchased two of the largest parcels  
14 along the rail corridor there, we built a 570 stall  
15 parking facility that is preplanned to add height and  
16 space to it. We're purchasing and will take possession  
17 of a second piece in March of next year in a location  
18 that we would anticipate a station being built. So we  
19 are moving steadfastly forward in hopes that you do as  
20 well, move steadfastly forward with a with a high-speed  
21 rail corridor. Our mayor and our council encourage you  
22 to continue forward. We certainly will be, as I  
23 indicated, be making a written response to you. We look  
24 anxiously forward to the days when we will see  
25 high-speed rail through the City of Fresno.

PH-F006-2  
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PH-F007-1

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1 So once again, welcome. Welcome from the mayor  
2 of the City of Fresno and all of the council members,  
3 and we are anticipating moving forward with the  
4 construction. Let's do it next year, though.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
6 much.

7 Mike Jensen speaking for Congressman Dennis  
8 Cordoza.

9 MR. MIKE JENSEN: Good afternoon. We have  
10 already submitted our comments once before, but again,  
11 we're just here to be counted and express our interest  
12 on behalf of the County of Merced and the Central  
13 Valley. I'm just going to read one paragraph into the

PH-F008-1



14 record. As I said, most of this has already been  
15 submitted.

16 The draft EIR/EIS concludes that development,  
17 construction, operation and maintenance of the  
18 high-speed rail will result in the creation of as many  
19 as 450,000 jobs in this state. As a member of Congress  
20 representing some of the highest unemployment areas in  
21 the nation, such as Merced County, I believe the  
22 potential this project brings for economic development  
23 in the Valley is especially important. All too often,  
24 the Central Valley lags behind economic development and  
25 job growth experienced in other areas of the state. I

PH-F008-1  
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1 strongly urge the Authority to adopt a Northern Mountain  
2 Crossing through Merced County to align with San Jose,  
3 with route connections up and down the Valley. This  
4 option will best connect the Valley with the other major  
5 urban areas of the state and also will bring better  
6 economic development opportunities to the Valley.  
7 Additionally, I strongly urge the Authority to  
8 incorporate the selection of a main repair and  
9 maintenance facility in Merced County at the Castle  
10 Airport Aviation and Development Center, also known as  
11 the former Castle Air Force Base.

PH-F008-2

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you.

14 Dr. Lee Boese speaking on behalf of Jeff Denham  
15 of Merced.

16 DR. LEE BOESE: Good afternoon, Rail Authority.  
17 I'm Lee Boese, and I'm speaking on behalf of Jeff Denham  
18 from the Twelfth District.

19 Dear Mr. Petrillo,

20 As you are well aware, transportation is a  
21 major issue in the Central Valley and throughout  
22 California. Traffic and congestion plague our roads and  
23 highways making it clear that the importance of  
24 high-speed rail cannot be ignored.

25 As the High-Speed Rail Authority progresses in

PH-F008-3

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1 bringing a high-speed system to California, I would like  
2 to offer my strong support for the location of a  
3 maintenance hub at the former Castle Air Force Base in  
4 Atwater. The Castle Airport Aviation and Development  
5 Center is an excellent site for the maintenance  
6 facility. This site is centrally located to the rail  
7 system, has the necessary acreage, approximately 134  
8 acres and change, of land available and the airport is  
9 available for transportation of necessary products for  
10 construction and maintenance of the system.

PH-F009-1

11 Additionally, Merced County consistently ranks  
12 in double-digit unemployment. The location of the  
13 maintenance facility at Castle Airport Aviation and  
14 Development Center is estimated to create over 2,000  
15 full-time jobs for the community in a variety of skill  
16 sets. Our community has the labor force available to  
17 fill these jobs and putting these people to work will  
18 allow for an economic influx into the area.

19 I would like to reiterate my support for the  
20 location of the High-Speed Rail Maintenance Facility at  
21 Castle Airport Aviation and Development Center. This  
22 site is a great match for the needs of a maintenance  
23 facility as well as a match for the community.

PH-F009-1  
cont.

24 And I further would like to add, if it's good  
25 enough for the Air National Guard, it's got to be good

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1 enough for the High-Speed Rail Authority.

2 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Next is Barbara  
3 Goodwin.

PH-F010

4 MS. BARBARA GOODWIN: Good afternoon. I want  
5 to add my thoughts, and thank you for coming to Fresno.  
6 It's nice to see you back here again.

7 I want to thank you, first of all, for  
8 extending your reviewing comment period to August.  
9 You've done a massive production of documents with a  
10 number of facts, which I think will help you with your  
11 ultimate course in terms of implementing the high-speed  
12 rail.

PH-F010-1

13 The message I want to give here today is very,  
14 very simple. We will be formulating our comments and  
15 providing them in a written form by the August deadline.  
16 However, I want to clearly state that the Fresno council  
17 government and its members strongly support the  
18 establishment of the high-speed rail in California  
19 within the Valley and Fresno. Regarding the station in  
20 Fresno, we're very pleased to see that it has been  
21 identified. As you heard from the City of Fresno, there  
22 are already efforts in motion to make sure that we can  
23 accommodate the high-speed rail.

PH-F010-2

24 And at this point in time, I am going to limit  
25 my comments just to let you know how supportive of this  
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PH-F010-3

1 whole effort that we are. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you for the  
3 comments.

4 With respect to the general comments,  
5 understand that we have extended the deadline for your  
6 written comments until August 31st, 2004. That is to  
7 give a number of parties -- actually, all of the public  
8 some additional time to review and think through their  
9 thoughts on this elaborate document. In addition, even  
10 the hearings have been -- we will have addition hearings  
11 on May 26th in San Jose and on June 23rd in Los Angeles.  
12 Those hearings are in addition to the five that have  
13 been scheduled previously.

14 Next speaker is Steve Newvine, CEO of the  
15 Greater Area Fresno Chamber of Commerce.

16 MR. STEVE NEWVINE: Good afternoon. I'm Steve  
17 Newvine, CEO of the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of  
18 Commerce.

19 The Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce  
20 reaffirms its support of the High-Speed Rail Train  
21 System for intercity travel in California as the  
22 preferred alternative to meet California's travel  
23 demands.

PH-F011-1

24 Based on the analysis done by the California  
25 High-Speed Rail Authority, we believe the system could  
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1 carry up to 68 million passengers by the year 2020 and  
2 link the metropolitan centers of San Francisco,  
3 Sacramento, Fresno, Los Angeles and San Diego.

4 The system offers significant environment  
5 benefits. The system will create new jobs in  
6 construction, within the passenger and maintenance  
7 stations, and in the local economies served.

8 With our central location within the proposed  
9 system, Fresno offers an outstanding location for the  
10 Authority's proposed Central Valley maintenance yard. A  
11 decision to select Fresno as the City for the Central  
12 Valley maintenance yard will prove to be valuable to  
13 Fresno and the Authority.

14 Thank you very much.

15 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
16 much.

17 Our next speaker is Mr. Marc Garcia.

18 MR. MARC GARCIA: Good afternoon, Mr. Petrillo  
19 and distinguished members. I am an attorney from  
20 Merced. I'm also a member of the Merced County  
21 High-Speed Rail Committee.

22 After observing this public hearing process  
23 over the last four to six weeks, it has become clear to  
24 me that the draft EIR/EIS is not only thoughtful in its  
25 analysis but also correct in its conclusions in  
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1 determining the different routes that are the basis for  
2 the high-speed rail system in California and for our  
3 future in transportation.

4 As an attorney, one of my duties as a lawyer  
5 are to carefully analyze issues and draw conclusions  
6 based on information that I am presented, and one of the  
7 things I was impressed with the EIR/EIS is the  
8 comprehensive analysis in the routes that were chosen  
9 and in the routes that were presented for final approval  
10 and draft EIR/EIS.

11 One of the things that is particularly  
12 concerning to me as a resident of Merced County and as a  
13 person who is in full-fledged support of a route, the  
14 Diablo Route that would go through Merced and  
15 particularly at Castle Air Force -- formerly Castle Air  
16 Force Base and maintenance facility that is proposed,  
17 there is the discussion about alternative routes that  
18 were discussed and taken off the table previously and  
19 whose support for has come around again and being  
20 discussed.

21 Committee members, there is a short window of  
22 opportunity for us to progress with the high-speed rail  
23 system. The time for the discussion of all routes has  
24 been addressed and it has been taken care of. The  
25 routes contained in the draft EIR/EIS are the routes  
0025

1 that are on the table at this point.

2 I am in full support again of a route that

PH-F011-1  
cont.

PH-F011-2

PH-F012-1

PH-F012-2

PH-F012-3

3 crosses the Diablo Range, that stops in Merced County at  
4 Castle Aviation Center to be used as a maintenance  
5 facility, the creation of jobs, the economic  
6 opportunities -- the -- excuse me. The health  
7 consequences and the consequences to our air with the  
8 high-speed rail system would present enormous  
9 opportunities for Merced County, and I urge the  
10 California High-Speed Rail to choose the Diablo Route  
11 and to follow the recommendations of the draft EIR/EIS.  
12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
14 much for your comments.

15 The next speaker is Hal B.H. Cooper, Jr. And  
16 following Mr. Cooper, I will be calling Marsh Pitman.

17 MR. HAL COOPER: Hal Cooper. I'm from  
18 Washington.

19 Mr. Petrillo, I would like to present to the  
20 Authority a picture describing the proposal I have, to  
21 have the Tehachapi tunnel of the Grapevine for the  
22 Authority, and I will give that one to you.

23 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
24 much.

25 MR. HAL COOPER: Very briefly, I put a proposal  
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1 together -- actually, I had presented it several years  
2 ago back in 1997. It's to build the tunnel through the  
3 Tehachapi Mountains through the Grapevine and Castaic,  
4 which will be used for the high-speed passenger trains  
5 and also to haul trucks and other railroad freight which  
6 could possibly be privately financed, such as is being  
7 done with the English Channel Tunnel, and this will  
8 allow the Authority to extend its budget to do other  
9 things that it might not otherwise be constrained to do.  
10 And there would be a similar tunnel proposed going east  
11 from Bakersfield between Caliente and just west of  
12 Mojave that would be not only for the high-speed rail  
13 but for the very heavy freight line going through the  
14 Tehachapi Loop. And the advantage would be that the  
15 Authority would be able to have roots for its passenger  
16 trains, be able to serve both the direct lines going  
17 through the Grapevine as well as the Antelope Valley and  
18 would certainly allow the Authority to have its  
19 ridership for the high-speed passenger trains approved.

20 And, of course, there would be some very  
21 significant environmental benefits, not only for the  
22 passenger side but for the environmental impact  
23 statement, but the fact that there's 20,000 trucks a day  
24 going over the Grapevine, and probably at least half of  
25 these could be put on a train scheduled with hourly

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1 service in conjunction with the high-speed rail  
2 passenger system. And there would be a similar type of  
3 arrangement for the tunnel going east, and I would  
4 propose that this might help jump start your project and  
5 benefit your economy and the high-speed rail system.

6 It's a fairly detailed document I put together,  
7 and also mention that there's a very similar idea that's

PH-F012-3  
cont.

PH-F013-1

8 just been started through the Alps Mountains in  
9 Switzerland with the Gosford Tunnel through which  
10 certainly benefits their environment as well as their  
11 economy and reduces their roadway maintenance costs.

12 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
14 much.

15 Next speaker is Marsh Pitman, followed by Val  
16 Lopez.

17 MR. MARSH PITMAN: Good afternoon. I'm Marsh  
18 Pitman from Transportation Involves Everyone. I have  
19 handouts for you, two items.

20 Authority Board Members,

21 Transportation Involves Everyone is an avid  
22 proponent for transportation reform in the United States  
23 and an advocate for the concept of high-speed rail in  
24 California.

25 In the final report of the high-speed rail

0028

1 commission governing body in December of 1996, it  
2 indicated a 200 mile per hour travel dictates special  
3 safety requirements. One of the concerns that we bring  
4 to your attention today is the proposed sharing of the  
5 right of ways, particularly between Fresno and  
6 Bakersfield, where heavy freight is adjacent to  
7 high-speed rail crowds according to the Draft  
8 Environmental Impact Report, within basically 100 foot  
9 right of way. The average length of rail cars, freight  
10 rail cars now, say, 60, 65 feet, some 75 feet, and there  
11 have been a number of accidents recently, for example in  
12 Korea and also in Spain. And also there have been  
13 accidents where the Federal Railroad Administration in  
14 the United States is reporting occurring 2,067 times,  
15 last year alone, box cars, tank cars, locomotives and  
16 gondolas turned sideways. If, in 100 foot right of way  
17 where there is existing freight lines, as are proposed  
18 by the Authority's plan, there is an accident, it's hard  
19 to keep or to expect freight cars not to be in the -- on  
20 the line of the high-speed train. And traveling at 200  
21 miles an hour, if noticed that there was an accident a  
22 quarter of a mile away, ahead, the engineer would have  
23 about three and a half to four seconds to react and stop  
24 the train to avoid an accident.

25 This is such a serious issue that we think that

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1 you also should submit a plan for the high-speed rail to  
2 the Homeland Security Department for review in that it  
3 would be easier for a terrorist, God forbid, to divert  
4 or to attack a freight train, therefore impinge upon the  
5 high-speed passenger service.

6 The issue in -- the issue as far as shared  
7 freight lines was raised at a San Joaquin Valley Rail  
8 Committee meeting on July 11th, 2003 in Martinez,  
9 California. And one of the questions, Will the  
10 high-speed rail corridor have its own right-of-way?  
11 Answer, yes. The train will stay on its own  
12 right-of-way with little deviation. And yet a later

PH-F013-1  
cont.

PH-F014-1

13 question was asked, Who's responsible for the plans and  
14 priorities including the environmental? Answer, If the  
15 existing railroad right of way is used, no environmental  
16 is required. In other words, it seems that they planned  
17 to use the same right-of-way as Union Pacific or  
18 Burlington Northern, that is to avoid to doing the  
19 environmental impact studies.

20 We have here, in one the documents that I have  
21 submitted is a letter dated today from Wayne Horiuchi,  
22 Special Representative of Union Pacific Railroad  
23 Company. And he indicated that Union Pacific Railroad  
24 has no written agreement at this time with the  
25 California High-Speed Rail Authority. So the proposal

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1 to share right-of-way with the freight lines, even if it

2 was a good idea, is not, to my knowledge, to our  
3 knowledge, something that it is thought wise by the  
4 freight companies. They're concerned about liability.  
5 I urge that an alternative would be used.

6 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Can you finish up  
7 your comments and submit it in writing because we  
8 generally try to keep it at about three minutes.

9 MR. MARSH PITMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.  
10 I'll also submit these pictures of freight accidents.

11 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you. Those  
12 are very important, significant comments, and I'm sure  
13 the environmental impact report will address them in the  
14 final report, and we appreciate you raising them.

15 Next we have Valentine Lopez followed by Tom  
16 Grave.

17 MR. VAL LOPEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Val  
18 Lopez. I am the tribal chairperson of the Amah Mutsun  
19 Tribal Band.

20 First I'd like to commend the high-speed rail  
21 for reaching out to our tribe. I feel that our voice  
22 will be heard, and we appreciate that.

23 I'd also like to thank you for giving our Amah  
24 Mutsun Tribal Band the opportunity to speak today  
25 regarding the high-speed rail project and it's impact on

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1 our traditional tribal lands of influence. From a  
2 practical standpoint, we support the high-speed rail  
3 project. Our tribal members must travel the roadways  
4 every day and realize there is a finite capacity on the  
5 existing roadways. With the projected growth in  
6 California, the high-speed rail will provide viable and  
7 sufficient alternative to travel. There are five  
8 specific points that our tribe would like to make today.

9 First, I would like to tell you that the Amah  
10 Mutsun Tribal Band is comprised of the descendents of  
11 Mission San Juan Bautista and Mission Santa Cruz. Our  
12 current tribal membership enrollment requirements allow  
13 the descendents of the Yokuts and other tribes who were  
14 taken to these missions to be members of our tribe.  
15 Therefore, our traditional tribal territory of influence  
16 is defined as north to Santa Cruz and directly east to

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17 approximately Highway 99 and from north Monterey and  
18 directly east again to approximately Highway 99. That's  
19 very large area. We are respectful of the Yokut's  
20 territory. However, many Yokut did go to our mission  
21 and we have Yokuts as members of our tribe today. We  
22 are respectful of the Yokut territory and ask for your  
23 respect for those and all other Indian territory as  
24 well. That's my first point.

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cont.

25 MR. VICTOR TORRES: My name Victor Torres, and  
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1 I'm an Amah Mutsun tribal member.  
2 Preference of routes: If the northern route  
3 along Interstate 580 is selected, we would be fine with  
4 this. Our territories would not be disturbed by the  
5 high-speed rail. Also, future development would not be  
6 as great or as fast on our tribal territory if the  
7 northern route is selected. If a southern route is  
8 selected, we would prefer that the route be the one that  
9 runs parallel to the land south of Los Banos and north  
10 to almost Stockton. The selection of this route would  
11 also better serve the Los Banos, Salinas and Monterey  
12 areas. These areas are rapidly growing and will  
13 continue to do so.

14 The next thing I would like to address is the  
15 issue of sensitive sites. If the route that parallels  
16 152 is selected, our Tribe has two sacred sites that  
17 potentially lay in the path of the high-speed rail. It  
18 is for this reason that we ask that the route has no  
19 physical or visual contact with the following: There is  
20 a small lake between Gilroy and the 152 Hollister  
21 cutoff. I believe this is Highway 25. The lake is  
22 marked on the road as Frazier Lake but is noted on many  
23 maps as San Felipe Lake. Our tribe has a sacred site in  
24 the vicinity of this area and we ask that visual and  
25 physical contact with the lake be avoided. Our next

PH-F015-2

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1 site is identified in two ways. First, when driving  
2 east from Gilroy we ask that visual and physical contact  
3 be avoided between county roadside markers 27.59 through  
4 30.92. This area can also be identified by emergency  
5 call boxes. Again, when driving east from Gilroy, we  
6 ask that you avoid visual and physical contact between  
7 emergency call boxes 152:272 through 152:316. This  
8 stretch of highway is approximately two miles long.

9 MR. VAL LOPEZ: The fourth point is we  
10 appreciate the opportunity to present here today, and we  
11 ask that the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band be included in all  
12 phases of planning and construction. We also ask that  
13 only members from our tribe be used as monitors on any  
14 construction project. Over 25 of our tribal members  
15 have been trained by the Society of California  
16 Archaeology, which has a committee dedicated to train  
17 Native American programs on cultural resources. This  
18 training gives our tribe a unique expertise related to  
19 laws, roles and responsibilities, archaeology, specific  
20 tribal anthropology and map reading. The society for  
21 California Archeology is also available for consulting

PH-F015-3

22 with tribal members as need. Once again, we ask that  
23 only Amah Mutsun Tribal members be used as monitors and  
24 that all monitors be trained by the Society for  
25 California Archaeology. Under no condition do we want  
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1 monitors to be used whose stated genealogy cannot be  
2 validated by BIA documentation. We also ask that any --  
3 that we can have an agreement in writing stating that we  
4 have responsibility for monitoring of these construction  
5 sites.

6 The fifth and final point is, our tribe has  
7 been invisible for 150 years. Although we are invisible  
8 to the public, our tribe remains strong. Today we  
9 number over 600. It is long overdue that our tribe be  
10 recognized by our community and by the State of  
11 California. It is for this reason that we ask that if  
12 the route that cuts across to Gilroy is selected, that  
13 the route from Los Banos to Gilroy, that the Gilroy  
14 Station to be named in honor of our tribe. We would be  
15 happy to work with you in any way possible to make this  
16 happen.

17 I'd be happy to answer any questions that you  
18 have or to answer questions about our tribal interest.

19 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Could you please  
20 leave us your written comments also because it would be  
21 quite helpful?

22 MR. VAL LOPEZ: I'll get these cleaned up and  
23 get them submitted.

24 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Great. Thank  
25 you.

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1 Next we have the Godfather of high-speed rail,  
2 State Senator Jim Costa.

3 MR. JIM COSTA: Thank you very much Mr.  
4 Chairman and members of the high-speed rail and staff  
5 that are here this afternoon. Thank you for the  
6 compliment, I think. Being of Italian descent and me  
7 being Portuguese, Godfather takes on multiple sorts of  
8 meanings for us Latins, but I'll take it positively  
9 because I think all of us share in the vision and the  
10 support of ensuring that California has an intermodal  
11 transportation system in the 21st Century that is  
12 interconnected, and that is obviously the key,  
13 connecting all of our modes of transportation systems.  
14 And I believe that members of this authority share that  
15 vision, otherwise you wouldn't have committed the time  
16 and effort that you have.

17 You understand, as I do, that high-speed rail  
18 is absolutely essential in terms of creating this  
19 intermodal transportation system. If we're going to be  
20 able to solve transportation challenges that California  
21 will have in the 21st Century with a growing population,  
22 that is certain. And so that's why your work is so  
23 important. I want to thank you for that hard work and  
24 thank you for being here in Fresno this afternoon as you  
25 continue to do your due diligence, as you continue to

0036

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PH-F016-1



1 work to be sure that you provide adequate and important  
2 input from the public. So your efforts here this  
3 afternoon to listen and take notes and testimony is part  
4 of what this important process is about, so we  
5 understand clearly the concerns of various regions of  
6 the state as it relates to the implementation of the  
7 high-speed rail and the other challenges that we face  
8 and to do so in a way that really creates collaborative  
9 efforts by all various interest groups of California.  
10 So that work that you are doing oftentimes, I think,  
11 goes overlooked and is sometimes unfairly criticized.  
12 And I'm here to thank you for that effort.

13 I do want to make two comments. The first is  
14 as it relates to the route selection. I'm going to tell  
15 you this afternoon what I've told you before, and that  
16 is, I do not intend to be a site selection committee of  
17 one in terms of telling you the routes that are  
18 necessary to insure its success. I will indicate that I  
19 think the preliminary work that has been done following  
20 the mission statement that we gave you when we created  
21 the Authority, that you have attempted to follow, and  
22 that is to make sure that; one, high-speed rail in  
23 California will be economically viable.

24 Two, to do that you have to develop a route  
25 selection that serves the most amount of people. That's  
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1 real simple. If you're not serving the most amount of  
2 people, then it's not going to be financially successful  
3 and you won't be able to make the interconnecting  
4 efforts with other modes of transportation.

5 And third, that you provide a recommendation on  
6 the technology, which you have done, more or less, as it  
7 relates to state of the art technologies that have now  
8 been in four decades of development that have hauled  
9 hundreds of millions of passenger miles safely in Europe  
10 and Japan with unparalleled record for speed and safety  
11 and efficiency as well as cost effectiveness.

12 So as you do your work here today, I would say  
13 that the input that you get from the public is important  
14 as you continue to fine tune. And I believe that's what  
15 you're attempting to do, fine tune through the sequence  
16 process that route selection and following the  
17 guidelines that you need to follow to insure the  
18 success. And obviously I will, as I have in the past,  
19 be willing to try to be with you every step of the way  
20 to help in your efforts.

21 The second point I wanted to make relates to  
22 questions raised by the press and the legislature, now  
23 considering several different legislative vehicles, as  
24 it relates to the timing of the bond measures that we  
25 together got placed on the ballot over almost two years  
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1 ago now.

2 The proposition that voters will vote on in  
3 November for nine billion dollars for high-speed rail  
4 and 950 million dollars for existing transit services,  
5 both intercity as well as it relates to urban rail. I

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cont.

PH-F016-2

6 would like nothing more than to see that measure remain  
7 on the ballot and voters to approve it, but we do  
8 realize that the State of California is faced with  
9 difficult economic times.

10 In my conversations with the present program  
11 center, John Burton, I think he would like to see it  
12 stand in the ballot. But as it relates to the work that  
13 the High-Speed Rail Authority has done, you have a  
14 timing for when you need financing in place, and I think  
15 that financing schedule that you have been considering  
16 allows us some options that the leadership and governor  
17 can contemplate.

18 And if, in fact, the governor, who stated  
19 during his campaign that he supports fast trains, that  
20 he's familiar with fast trains. That's his terminology,  
21 not mine, because of his experience in Europe, that  
22 California should have fast trains. The legislature and  
23 the governor therefore need to work together as they  
24 determine the timing of the bond measure, and if they  
25 believe that the timing makes sense to leave it in

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1 November, I will support that, obviously.

2 If they come up with a subsequent date, that  
3 would be November of 2006, the legislation that would  
4 take it off the November ballot and place it on the  
5 November ballot of 2006, I think that is an option that  
6 could work based upon your tight schedule. That has to  
7 be determined, I think, with the governor working  
8 together with the leadership and legislation. But I  
9 think that is the only other option that we can  
10 consider, to take the bond measure with no ability to  
11 ensure that it's on the subsequent ballot at the next  
12 election cycle would be a tragic mistake, in my opinion.

13 There is no ability to commit that you can  
14 still maintain bipartisan support that we painfully were  
15 able to put together during our efforts two years ago.  
16 And so my view is, that we ought to try to keep it on  
17 November of this year. If it's determined by the  
18 governor and the leadership that they will support the  
19 effort in November, 2006, I think that can work as well.  
20 But it has to be done in the same legislation so that  
21 the law remains the same as you were following it to  
22 make it work.

23 So those are the two comments I wanted to make;  
24 that we will continue to work with you as we fine tune  
25 the route selection, and two, that we make sure that we

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1 keep the financing in place. We have to keep the  
2 financing in place to demonstrate to Californians that  
3 we are committed to an intermodal 21st Century system of  
4 transportation in which high-speed rail is the catalyst  
5 to link our different modes together, and that will  
6 provide the additional 95 million dollars that our  
7 transit district desperately needs and continue to  
8 improve the intercity rail system that has been so  
9 successful in California.

10 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very

PH-F016-2  
cont.

11 much, and I personally agree with you on the financing  
12 aspect of this, and it's important that we all keep in  
13 mind that a billion dollars of this financing goes  
14 directly to local government for their transportation  
15 systems that connect into high-speed rail, which is an  
16 important part of this function. And the sooner we can  
17 get that started, obviously, the better.

18 And I also want to thank you for all of your  
19 efforts. You've done some real hard work over the past  
20 decade shepharding high-speed rail through the  
21 legislature and creating us. Thank you.

22 MR. JIM COSTA: Well, thank you. A lot of  
23 people have worked hard on this. It has been a pleasure  
24 to work with everyone firsthand over the last two  
25 decades. And the mayor from Shafter, I'm always pleased

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1 to see and her support and her advocacy, and I think  
2 that many have done a great job. And Mr. Morshed and  
3 his staff with very limited resources. And we need to  
4 make sure that we continue to provide the necessary  
5 resources.

6 And please give the other board members my  
7 greetings and tell them to stay at it. This is an  
8 important process. We know it's not an easy one, but if  
9 it was easy, it would have been done years ago.

10 MR. ROD DIRIDON: Mr. Chairman, I would like to  
11 add my own statement for appreciation for Jim's  
12 leadership during his time in the State legislature and  
13 note that we will be looking forward to working with him  
14 in the Federal legislature.

15 MR. JIM COSTA: Well, we hope so. But I'm here  
16 today as a private citizen but with a passion for the  
17 high-speed rail that each and every one of you have.  
18 Thank you and good luck, and I have to head to  
19 Bakersfield. We don't have a fast train, so I've got to  
20 get going.

21 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Tom Grave  
22 followed by Thomas Worthington.

23 MR. TOM GRAVE: Good afternoon. My name is Tom  
24 Grave. I live in Merced, California.

25 I have three minutes. Is that correct?

0042

1 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Yes.

2 MR. TOM GRAVE: I'm affiliated with TIE,  
3 Transportation Involves Everyone. I am personally a  
4 strong supporter of the establishment of the high-speed  
5 rail system in California.

6 This afternoon I wish to address issues related  
7 to the high-speed rail alignment in Northern California,  
8 specifically the crossing of the coast range. What I  
9 have here is the high-speed rail summary reports and  
10 action plan submitted in 1996 by the high-speed rail  
11 commission after their years of study of this issue.  
12 I'd like to submit this for the record, if I may.

13 I have, for some reason, been led to believe  
14 that the study undertaken by the commission was in some  
15 way superficial, even though it involved a number of

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16 years of study. But I spent a lot of time with that  
17 document recently and found that it was remarkably  
18 thorough in its investigations and details in its action  
19 and plan.

20 I also understand that the high-speed rail  
21 commission enabling legislation mandated that the  
22 commission include experts in the fields of economics,  
23 transportation and environmental issues. In fact, such  
24 expertise was, I believe, well represented by the  
25 commission.

0043

1 The high-speed rail commission recommended that  
2 the Altmont Pass be the corridor for connecting the Bay  
3 Area with the Central Valley. The commission provided  
4 detailed support in this route and it's found in that  
5 document. The legislation directed the consideration of  
6 all feasible proposed routes. The High-Speed Rail  
7 Authority abruptly removed -- and I say abruptly  
8 removed -- the Altmont Pass as a possible corridor in  
9 the year 2000. I believe in the space of three or four  
10 months it was on your docket and it vanished and was no  
11 longer being considered.

12 It's my feeling that the determination of  
13 feasibility for such a proposed route should have been  
14 made through an EIR and EIS process. This was not done.  
15 I cannot imagine what rationale was used to eliminate  
16 Altmont Pass from any future consideration. Taking into  
17 account potential ridership, expected revenues,  
18 implementation costs and environmental impacts, which I  
19 believe are the main criteria that you work with and  
20 which the commission worked with. Altmont Pass is  
21 certainly a superior choice, compared to the two  
22 competing alternatives, namely Pacheco and the Diablo  
23 Range alternative.

24 I attended a workshop in Fresno this week --  
25 two weeks ago, sponsored by the High-Speed Rail

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1 Authority and was told that an efficient path of travel  
2 from the state capitol to the Bay Area is by way of  
3 Chowchilla. I can't understand how that could be the  
4 case, but there it is. Altmont Pass would provide less  
5 mitigation of environmental damage than either Pacheco  
6 or the Diablo Range route. One would be hard pressed to  
7 mitigate impacts to the Orestimba Wilderness which is  
8 the largest wilderness in the coast range. This area  
9 would be impacted by a rail corridor through the Diablo  
10 Range.

11 And I'll just comment -- and I'll amplify these  
12 comments for the written record -- but these wilderness  
13 areas were designated for a purpose, and we have used up  
14 about 95 percent of the land in this country and have  
15 about five percent left to do this with. And I would  
16 suggest we don't just move in there and construct  
17 something on such an area. Once you use it up, you  
18 can't bring it back and reconstitute it. So I believe  
19 there are very significant impacts that we owe our  
20 future generations leaving that territory as it is.

PH-F017-1  
cont.

PH-F017-2

21 With regard to the miles of tunneling proposed  
22 for either Pacheco or the Diablo Range, I see no  
23 evidence of efforts to dissipate the tremendous amounts  
24 of heat that would be generated by rail traffic through  
25 such tunnels. I asked a High-Speed Rail Authority staff

PH-F017-2  
cont.

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1 person this question on Monday and he had no answer.  
2 Conclusion, the high-speed rail system should  
3 facilitate smart growth, not sprawl. And sprawl, I'm  
4 thinking of the station I visited personally seven miles  
5 from Los Banos, I believe. I realize that there is no  
6 designated station, but it's out by a dairy farm, miles  
7 from anywhere else. I wonder if that's where the I-5  
8 city that's going to be sprawled in that part of this  
9 beautiful valley is going to be.

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10 I believe that the Altmont Pass route has the  
11 prospect of fostering smart growth in a manner superior  
12 to your Pacheco or the Diablo Range. I'm just about  
13 done.

14 Taking into consideration one more time the  
15 issues of ridership potential, the cost implement and  
16 the environmental impact, Altmont Pass remains the  
17 preferred alternative and should be given full  
18 consideration by the Authority at this time. Thank you.

PH-F017-4

19 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Thank you very  
20 much and we look forward to your written comments.

21 Mr. Thomas Worthington.

22 MR. THOMAS WORTHINGTON: Good afternoon,  
23 members of the Authority. My name Thomas Worthington,  
24 and I represent Impact Sciences, an environmental  
25 consulting firm with offices in Southern California, the

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1 Bay Area and the Sacramento Valley.

2 It's absolutely critical that all the impacts  
3 of such an ambitious project be analyzed, and today I'm  
4 here to offer some constructive criticism regarding your  
5 EIR/EIS.

6 I'd like to point out some statements and will  
7 submit longer comments in writing. Just food for  
8 thought here today.

9 Your document on Page 522 states the HST  
10 alternative which will stimulate additional growth in  
11 some Central Valley counties between Sacramento and  
12 Fresno. However, it then states that the conclusions of  
13 your analysis, the HST alternative would not stimulate  
14 large shift in residential locations in the Bay Area and  
15 Los Angeles into the Central Valley. However, the  
16 document then goes on to state that experiences in other  
17 countries that have HST systems can provide a locational  
18 advantage to those areas that are in proximity to a  
19 station, along the same time, facilitating broader  
20 economic expansion of a wider geographic region.

PH-F018-1

21 The alternative would contribute to a potential  
22 economic boost in two ways according to your document.  
23 And HST system would provide user benefits saving travel  
24 time, cost, et cetera, accessibility improvement for its  
25 citizens. The system would improve accessibility to

0047

1 labor and customer markets thereby potentially  
2 contributing competitiveness in the state's overall  
3 economy. However, historical fiscal evidence of the  
4 impact of a major transportation corridor points to an  
5 opposite conclusion than reflected in your document.  
6 Whenever transportation corridors have made business  
7 commute travel easier to areas with lower costs of  
8 living, large amounts of permanent residential  
9 development have followed. Examples include the San  
10 Bernardino Valley and Thousand Oaks areas along the I-5  
11 and US 101 corridors, starting back in the 1950's and  
12 continuing today. Based on that experience, it's clear  
13 that the San Francisco/Los Angeles route would only  
14 encourage people to move into the Central Valley and  
15 commute greater distances.

16 Why this is important is your document reaches  
17 an opposite conclusion. It states that employment would  
18 be regenerated but not as much permanent residential  
19 relocation in the Valley. And all I'm here to do today  
20 is to indicate to you that you really do need to analyze  
21 the indirect effects of what a line would mean. While  
22 on one hand it has great economic benefit to the state,  
23 and that's great, you need to make sure that you analyze  
24 the environmental effects, all of them.

25 I'd like to make two other points very quickly.

0048

1 One has to do with the impacts of tunneling. In  
2 analyzing the document, we haven't found an analysis of  
3 the dirt, where it will go and what the effects of that  
4 placement of Earth material will be. Are there  
5 sensitive species that will be covered by that dirt? We  
6 don't know. That impact analysis needs to be conducted.

7 The next item has to do with biological  
8 impacts, and we found it a little bit surprising to see  
9 in your document that no field studies have been  
10 conducted associated with your analysis, not even any  
11 testing of any of the potential sensitive areas along  
12 the state. No field sampling at all, and that's very  
13 unusual for a project particularly of this magnitude.

14 There was no estimation of background growth  
15 from now to the year to 2020. That's a very common  
16 practice of environmental documents, to assume that  
17 there's a background growth rate between today and when  
18 the project would start. That needs to be done.

19 Last comment. Also animal movement. Animal  
20 movement probably gets one of the shorter analysis in  
21 your document, and I think that you need to look very  
22 hard at what the effects of the corridors that you've  
23 identified will have on the ability of the sensitive  
24 animals, particularly the kit fox, to move around the  
25 rim of the Valley. It's a very important issue, and

0049

1 this  
2 lineup will widen existing barriers such as I-5, as I  
3 said. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH PETRILLO: Next is Dennis

PH-F018-1  
cont.

PH-F018-2